

Other Family Planning Brochures

ABC's About Sex (English & Spanish)

Cycle Beads (English & Spanish)

DEPO (English & Spanish)

Emergency Contraceptive (English & Spanish)

Nuvaring (English & Spanish)

Pelvic Exam (English & Spanish)

The Birth Control Patch (English & Spanish)

Vaginal Health Care (English & Spanish)

Abstinence



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Your Birth Control Pills

How to Take Them

Their Advantages

Disadvantages

Warning Signs



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INSTRUCTIONS:

BEGIN your pills

TAKE a pill every day about the same time every day. The pills won't work if they aren't taken one every day. If you spot or bleed in between periods keep taking the pills but call us.

USE another method of birth control for the first 2 weeks. Foam and/or condoms are fine. It takes this long for your pills to begin to work.

THE LAST 7 pills in your pack are a different color. Your period should begin while you are taking them. It will probably be lighter than usual. These are **NOT** birth control pills. Do not get mixed up and take them out of order. They are last.

WHEN you have taken your last pill in the whole pack, open a new pack and begin all over again. It makes no difference if you are still having your period; don't wait for it to stop, take your first pill.

If you miss a pill, take the missed pill as soon as you remember it, use another method of birth control (foam and/or condoms) along with your pills for the rest of the pack. If you miss 2 pills, take 2 as soon as you remember and 2 the next day and use another method such as condoms and foam for the rest of the pack. You may have some spotting.

28 Day Pills (Oral Contraceptives)

- ⇒ If you miss 3 pills, **CALL US**, use another method and do not take any more pills.
- ⇒ If you have **SKIPPED** a period and have missed pills, use another method and **CALL US** for a pregnancy test
- ⇒ If you took all your pills correctly and skip a period, start a new pack of pills and go on as usual. If you skip 2 periods, **CALL US** before starting the next pack
- ⇒ If you are put on an antibiotic for any reason or have vomiting and/or diarrhea (more than 3 large watery stools), continue your birth control pills but use a backup method the rest of that cycle of pills.

WHEN you take birth control pills, you might have some of the same feelings as if you were pregnant; morning sickness, breast soreness and swelling, and bloating. Other things that can happen are: spotting or bleeding between periods, lighter periods, discharge, less cramping. Most of these will stop after the first few months but be sure to tell us about any of them that you might have.

ADVANTAGES

- Not connected with the sex act; convenient to use
- Very effective
- Less mid-cycle or ovulation pain
- May relieve menstrual cramps
- Menstrual periods are more regular
- Number of days of bleeding shorter
- Anemia decreased
- Pre-menstrual depression or nervousness may be less
- Lower numbers of women having ovarian cysts and fibrocystic breast disease
- Acne is often improved
- Increased enjoyment of sex (not afraid of pregnancy)
- Less chance of getting Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID)
- Less chance of cancer of ovary and lining of uterus (endometrial uterine cancer)

DISADVANTAGES

Possible minor side effects:

- ◆ Missed menstrual periods
- ◆ Decreased sex drive (rare with new low dose pills)
- ◆ Slight nausea
- ◆ Spotting (breakthrough bleeding)
- ◆ Worsening of acne (again, rare with new low dose pills)
- ◆ Depression; mood changes can occur
- ◆ Headaches
- ◆ Increase in breast size

RISKS-RARE, but Possible Life Threatening

If you should ever have any of these symptoms **CALL US**, your family doctor or go to the emergency room at the nearest hospital:

- A** **Abdominal Pain—severe**
- C** **Chest Pain**
- H** **Headache—severe, sharp**
- E** **Eye Problems—vision loss, blurred vision, dizziness**
- S** **Severe leg pain in calf or thigh, cramps or swelling**

It is still more dangerous to be pregnant than to be on any kind of birth control.

DO NOT trade or borrow pills from a friend, not all pills are the same.

KEEP your pills in a safe place, away from children and not in your handbag so they cannot get lost or stolen.

TAKE your pills about the same time every day

CALL first if you decide to stop taking your pills

FINALLY, do take care of yourself, read these instructions again and

REMEMBER, we are here to help so call us if you have any questions. Keep your pill supply in a safe place (not your handbag) and away from children.

CLINIC PHONE NUMBER: _____

The birth control pills you are taking are called:
